

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3486

S E C R E T JIDDA 1080

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA, PK

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR' S APPOINTMENT WITH PRINCE SULTAN
MONDAY MARCH 19.

REF: A. JIDDA 1034; B. JIDDA 1061

1. WITH REGARD TO NOTION SAUDIS NOW APPARENTLY
HARBORING RE POSSIBLE TRANSFER OF F-86' S AND T-33' S TO
PAKISTAN, I NOTE THAT SINCE REFTEL A SENT THERE HAS BEEN
CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF US ARMS ASSISTANCE TO
PAKISTAN WITH, WE ASSUME, INCREASED SENSITIVITY ON THIS
MATTER. IN ADDITION, IT WORTH NOTING GENERAL TIKKA KHAN,
PAKISTANI CHIEF OF STAFF, HAS BEEN IN SAUDI ARABIA PAST
FOUR OR FIVE DAYS AND PERHAPS TOPIC OF
F-86' S MAY HAVE HAVE COME UP IN HIS DISCUSSIONS. (WE DO NOT
KNOW FOR CERTAIN.)

2. WE RECOGNIZE THIS IS COMPLEX ISSUE AND THAT IT MAY BE
DIFFICULT RESOLVE MATTER IN WASHINGTON WITHIN FEW DAYS ,
PARTICULARLY PROBLEM OF FINDING FOR SAUDIS SOME OTHER
SATISFACTORY WAY DISPOSING OF OVERAGE AIRCRAFT NOW ON HAND.

3. AT SAME TIME, IF IT SEEMS HIGHLY UNLIKELY WE WOULD BE
ABLE AGREE TO TRANSFER F-86' S AND T-33' S TO PAKISTAN, IT
MIGHT BE WELL FOR ME AT LEAST TO FLASH SULTAN WARNING
SIGNAL AT OUR MEETING MARCH 19. I COULD TELL HIM THAT
PROBLEM IS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION IN WASHINGTON BUT
THAT INITIAL REVIEW INDICATES TRANSFER OF PLANES TO ANY
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OTHER COUNTRY IN THIS AREA WOULD RAISE VERY GRAVE PROBLEMS FOR USG, AND THAT AT THIS TIME, THEREFORE, SAUDIS SHOULD BE MOST CAUSTIOUS IN DISCUSSING POSSIBILITY OF TRANSFER WITH PAKS OR ANYONE ELSE. THUS, WOULD MAKE IT CLEAR, IF DEPT WISHES, THAT WE CANNOT HOLD OUT MUCH HOPE THAT WE COULD APPROVE AIRCRAFT TRANSFER TO PAKS.

4. IN ORDER SUGAR THIS PILL A BIT, WOULD HOPE DEPT MIGHT APPROVE POSITIVE REPLY TO SULTAN' S REQUEST INCLUDED REFTEL B. SULTAN WILL QUITE PROBABLY BE LEAVING FOR TRIP TO BAHRAIN, QATAR AND OMAN ABOUT MAR 21.
THACHER

SECRET

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS

*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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